Ethiopia: The Epitome of The SIGN Model

The SIGN Model

Education

Implants

Validation

By Lewis Zirkle, MD

Black Lion Hospital in Addis Ababa is the leading orthopedic training program in Ethiopia. Ethiopia has 43 orthopedic surgeons serving a population of 98 million people. Traffic accidents are increasing. The leadership and government are addressing the need for more orthopedic surgeons by accepting 77 orthopedic trainees into their program. We are impressed with the enthusiasm and the desire to learn and teach displayed in both the teaching faculty and the orthopedic trainees. This was demonstrated in both the recent Ethiopian SIGN Conference and through doing SIGN Surgery together.

We are developing a plan with Ethiopian leaders, the Australian team of orthopedists led by Graham Forward, Johns Hopkins University, and other interested people to assist with supporting the increase of trauma facilities. SIGN’s support includes the donation of SIGN Implants, Instruments, and Education to hospitals where these orthopedic trainees will settle to practice.
Building Alliances

Many hands create progress faster. Here are a few of the people who are working with us to build orthopedic capacity:

**Graham Forward, MD**, who is with Australian Doctors for Africa, has been constructing operating rooms and supplying equipment in Ethiopia for many years. We are working together on a timetable for supplying operating rooms with equipment including SIGN Implants and Instruments.

**Mark Purnell, MD** presented at the conference and discussed treatment for patients on the surgical ward. He and his family have generously supported the start up costs for SIGN Programs in Pakistan and Zimbabwe.

**Jim Ficke, MD**, Chief of Orthopedic Surgery at Johns Hopkins University, and Chief Resident **Renée Genova, MD** presented at the conference and discussed treatment for patients on the surgical ward.

**Rich Gellman, MD**, an expert in deformity correction, presented a 4-day workshop during the trauma course at Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI). Randy Huebner assisted Dr. Gellman with organizing the training equipment. Both Rich and Randy are SIGN Board Members.

**Mapour Mading, MD** from South Sudan is obtaining his residency from MOI and is keen to practice the principals he learned at the MOI trauma course and in Dr. Gellman’s workshop when he returns to Juba.

We’re proud to partner with **SIGN Surgeons** to build orthopedic capacity in developing countries. These surgeons are as good as any in the world and are the future of orthopedics.

Training Beyond Surgery

Randy Huebner worked very hard during our recent trip and complemented the role of SIGN in Ethiopia. He visited with engineers who were eager to learn how to design and produce orthopedic implants in a modern manufacturing facility located in Addis Ababa.

Dr. Sami Hailu (left) and Samson Fitsum(right) tell Randy about their dream of designing & manufacturing plates in Ethiopia.
“Love Until The Grave”

By Dr. Nardos Worku, Orthopedic Resident

This story will bring you memories of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet.

Our Romeo is Dinka and our Juliet is Sifan. Dinka and Sifan were involved in a terrible traffic accident. They each sustained similar fractures to the femur bone. Unlike the old story of Romeo and Juliet, their story did not end tragically; rather, it has a happy ending. Let me share this astonishing story from the beginning...

Dinka and Sifan met in high school seven years ago and knew immediately that they were meant to spend a lifetime together. A few weeks prior to their accident they became engaged. They decided to wait for the Easter break from college to tell their families their news.

As planned, they started their trip to Ambo on the Wednesday before Easter to announce their engagement to their families. The driver of the mini-bus was drowsy and driving erratically. Two hours after beginning their journey home, the mini-bus collided with a delivery truck. It was a tragic accident. There were more than 20 passengers on the mini-bus. Four people were killed instantly, including the driver’s assistant.

Those who survived the crash were immediately taken to Ambo Hospital where they received emergency treatment. Sifan and Dinka were referred to Black Lion Hospital the next morning.

During their hospital stay they were in different wards, separated by one floor. Residents at Black Lion Hospital were their messengers; taking letters back and forth in the orthopedic ward. After several days, they went into surgery on the same day. Successful placement of the SIGN Nail repaired their fractured bones. They expressed their gratitude to the surgeons at Black Lion for the wonderful care and to SIGN for donating the implants needed for their surgeries. **With limbs fully healed, they are excited to begin their life long journey together.**
Thank You

Teresa Ford and Spencer Bishop for hosting a

Party With a Purpose

Their hospitality resulted in contributions which sum up to support a year’s worth of SIGN Surgeries at hospitals like Mulago Hospital in Kampala, Uganda.

SIGN Family Reunion

WEDNESDAY
September 21, 2016
in Richland, Washington

A Celebration of SIGNIFICANT Collaborations

Healing Through Training

Your Gift Heals
Provide a scholarship to enable SIGN Surgeons to expand their orthopedic knowledge and surgical skills

2016 SIGN Conference
September 21-24

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Contact Lori.Maier@signfracturecare.org for more information

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